

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Kentucky's Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS)

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 158.6453, 703 KAR 5:020

History/Background:

Existing Policy. With the passage of federal legislation known as the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), many states with existing statewide assessment and accountability programs have found it necessary to modify their state systems. Kentucky continues to make modifications and seek federal flexibility as it strives for full compliance and implementation of federal requirements and to marry state and federal goals for student, school and district performance. The process around modifications and flexibility is an ongoing one as the US Department of Education further clarifies and interprets the original federal act with the release of guidance and regulations. This requires states to react to new information by proposing changes to their assessment systems and requesting US Department of Education approval of the changes as a way to meet NCLB requirements.

Schools and districts that successfully meet federal accountability requirements are classified as making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on an annual basis. Schools and districts are determined to have made AYP for a school year if the school and district and all student subpopulations of sufficient size to be reported:

- (a) Meet annual measurable objectives (AMO) or the target percentage of students scoring proficient and distinguished in reading and mathematics;
- (b) Show progress on the Other Academic Indicator:
 - Prior year CATS classification of any category of meets goal or progressing **or** if in assistance, growth at or above the state average for the specific grade configuration at the elementary and middle school levels;
 - Prior year graduation rate at the high school level; and
- (c) Test at least 95% of enrolled students and all subpopulations of sufficient size.

The goal for NCLB is that all students reach proficiency in reading and mathematics by 2014. NCLB also requires that states report results for all students and students in the following subpopulations: White (Non-Hispanic), African-American, Hispanic, Asian,

Limited English Proficiency, Economically Disadvantaged (Free and Reduced Lunch) and Students with Disabilities.

Including assessments that meet requirements for NCLB was an important focus in the request for assessment proposals released in August 2005 and the subsequent new assessment contracts awarded in March 2006. The new contracts address Kentucky Board of Education priorities and goals for improvements to the state assessment and accountability system, as first established in the document Seven Steps Forward in Assessment, and define a test design that meets NCLB assessment requirements for reading, mathematics and science.

Beginning in 2007, to comply with NCLB Kentucky students in grades 3-8 will take a Kentucky Core Content Test in reading and mathematics annually and in science once each at elementary, middle and high school levels based on the state's content standards. This is an expansion of the testing of reading and mathematics from the state requirements in CATS. The results of student performance on the Kentucky Core Content Tests will be used to calculate both federal (NCLB) and state (CATS) accountability as it has from the beginning of NCLB reporting. NCLB results in 2006 will be released in early August.

At the June meeting, staff will provide an in-depth overview of NCLB, how AYP is determined and current federal issues relative to Kentucky's assessment.

Policy Issue(s):

As Kentucky implements NCLB requirements, staff will seek advice from technical experts with the United States Department of Education, national associations and the National Technical Advisory Panel on Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA) and will bring forward to the Kentucky Board of Education appropriate issues for review and action.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

To reach proficiency and make Adequate Yearly Progress, schools and districts must make data-driven decisions and manage effectively change to assessments, curriculum, instruction and supports to learning.

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Commissioner of Education

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